

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Cowper.*



AUNT SOPHY'S COMFORT.

TOO SOON.

CHAPTER XIII.—SETTLED.

MR. WILLIAMS had stayed in the sitting-room expecting his visitor to come back, but he had brought a book in his hand, so he began to read, and time passed away.

Miss Ashton looked up, but her brother was deep in his book, and the chief solicitude of her life was that Walter's leisure should be undisturbed, so she

sat still, just giving a quiet glance now and then to the garden.

The garden seat was set far back under the trees, and it was not visible from Aunt Sophy's corner. She felt fidgety at first—then curious—then interested. She looked up again at her brother-in-law; he had roused from his book, and was also looking towards the garden. The branches of the trees interfered with his perfect view of the garden seat, but still Mr. Williams opened his eyes and looked surprised;

gradually his face assumed a very unusual and wakened-up expression. It seemed to him that his studious friend, instead of saying good-by to Ursula, was seated beside her, talking very earnestly.

"Sophy"—the truth had not yet dawned on the scholar's mind—"Helder is still talking to Ursula; should I go out to him?"

Miss Ashton did not go to the window, but she moved across the room so as to get Mr. Williams's view of the situation.

Her brother turned a perplexed face towards her. "What can they be talking about for so long? some book, I suppose."

Aunt Sophy smiled. There was a conscious look of mystery about her that puzzled him still more. She simply said, "I don't think you are wanted, Walter."

Mr. Williams kept silence; he felt there was a special meaning in her answer, so he waited. He had not much insight into feminine nature, but he knew that the way to make a woman speak out is to leave her unquestioned.

Aunt Sophy went back to her corner and her needlework, but her thread broke. Somehow she felt unsettled. After a few unsatisfactory stitches she folded up her work and put it aside.

"Walter"—Mr. Williams's ready attention showed her he was really interested—"have you known Mr. Helder long?"

"I have known him—" a pause of recollection—"six or seven years, at least."

"Why did he never come here before?"

Mr. Williams looked puzzled.

"Well, I really don't know. I never asked him, I suppose. I never thought of him except as a very well-informed man till that day at the Museum; then he was so kind to Ursula, and you had said in the morning that it would be well to increase our acquaintances, so I asked him down here."

"Then you"—Miss Ashton hesitated and blushed, it seemed such a very delicate subject to discuss—"you did not think about Ursula—I mean specially—in asking Mr. Helder here?"

"Why should I think about Ursula?" The colour flew over Mr. Williams's pale, thoughtful face; he looked intently at Miss Ashton. "Perhaps I mistake your meaning, Sophy, but I could not think of such nonsense. Why, Helder is old enough to be her father! Bless me"—he took off his spectacles with very unusual irritation—"Ursula's a baby!"

Miss Ashton was alarmed at her brother's outbreak—frightened, but not convinced. The meekest woman clings to her own judgment in a love matter.

"Ursula is the age her mother was when you asked her to marry you, Walter; she was eighteen last birthday."

The vexation faded into a look of sadness. "You are right, Sophy." Then he murmured to himself, "Poor darling—yes; and I was older than Helder is."

There was a silence. Neither father nor aunt could speak the thought that was in the mind of each; and then came quick footsteps on the gravel path, and Mr. Helder himself.

He looked flushed and eager.

"Williams," he said, hurriedly, "can I speak to you in your study?"

Mr. Williams had no reliance on feminine judgment except in matters purely domestic, but the idea suggested by his sister-in-law had produced a sort of chaos in his mind; he felt, in a vague way, that it

was she who was responsible for this perplexity, and therefore she ought to share it.

"You can say anything before my sister" (then, catching at a fragment of hope), "unless it is about Persian—you don't care about Persian, do you, Sophy?"

Mr. Helder looked into her sweet, gentle face, and took courage.

"No, it is not about any learned matter," he continued, earnestly, "and I am very glad to speak before Miss Ashton, because I hope she will take my part. I meant to have spoken to you first. I dare say you will be surprised, and I believe you will think I have been hasty, but that can't be helped. Williams, I want you to give me your daughter."

Mr. Williams had begun to rub his forehead with his hand before the sentence ended.

"But, Mr. Helder"—agitation made him formal and constrained—"Ursula is a child; you should not have spoken to her; why she is—I was just now saying to her aunt—yes, she is a baby."

Mr. Helder looked beseechingly at Aunt Sophy, but he spoke for himself.

"My dear friend, she is all I want in a wife; and if she is so good as to accept me and my awkward elderly ways, won't you let us be happy? I think she likes me. I know I am not nearly good enough for her. I knew it, and tried to stay away, and keep out of temptation, but you tempted me yourself, old friend, to-day, and when I saw her again I felt I must know my fate."

Michael looked almost handsome as he spoke this in warm rapid words.

Mr. Williams drew his hand across his eyes. He turned to his sister.

"Sophy, you know Ursula better than I do. Is she old enough to think of this?"

Again Mr. Helder fixed beseeching eyes on Aunt Sophy. She smiled, but she looked sad too.

"I am sure Mr. Helder does not wish to be married directly," she said; "and, Walter, you know we don't quite understand Ursula, and it seems to me that Mr. Helder does."

"Perhaps you are right, Sophy," said Mr. Williams.

As Michael Helder went home that evening—for he stayed till late at Vine Cottage—across his bright vision of joy those words came back, "We don't quite understand Ursula." Was she, then, so difficult to understand?

CHAPTER XIV.—"WHY DOES HE LOVE ME?"

URSULA gave no opportunity to either her father or aunt for any words of congratulation or of advice. Mr. Helder looked when he went away as if he would have preferred a private leave-taking, but Ursula's shyness had come back, and she kept close beside her aunt when she said good-by to her lover. Then she bade a hasty good-night and ran away.

She had just put on her dressing-gown, had let all her long dark hair loose over her shoulders, and was preparing for a delightful reverie, when Aunt Sophy tapped at the door.

Ursula groaned, "What is it?" She spoke in a sleepy voice. Aunt Sophy came in without further invitation.

At all times Ursula disliked "scenes and fusses," and she feared Aunt Sophy would go through some

stereotyped form "proper" to the present occasion; so she stood stiffly, without even a smile of welcome.

Aunt Sophy was not rebuffed, though it cost her timid nature an effort to seek Ursula's confidence.

"My dear," she said, simply, and she kissed the girl, "I hope you are very happy. You are, are you not, dear?"

Ursula was touched; she had been longing to get by herself to pour out some of the wild unbelieving joy that she had been keeping in so tightly. She put both arms round Miss Ashton's neck and hugged her till her aunt was fairly startled.

"Thank you, dear aunt," Ursula whispered, and her aunt felt tears on her cheek; "I was a wretch to you just now, but I suppose I was not quite accountable. Aunt, did you think of it—did it ever come into your head that he cared for me?"

She still keeps her arms round her aunt, and hides her burning face on her shoulder. Aunt Sophy feels uncomfortable, she must speak the truth.

"No, dear; but I thought you cared for him."

Ursula's head is erect in an instant, she looks at her aunt with frightened eyes.

"Aunt, do you think he thought so? Oh, if I thought that, I—"

Aunt Sophy puts her arm round the girl, and draws her close again. "My darling, I should laugh if I did not see you are really distressed; but do not worry yourself. Why, to tell you the truth, if Mr. Helder noticed your manner towards him as I did, it showed more dislike than liking."

"Are you sure of it? Then why did you say that and make me so wretched?"

"My dear child," says Aunt Sophy, soothingly, and the tired head sinks once more on her shoulder, "I judged only by your manner between his visits. My dear, I could not help seeing you were unhappy, and I thought it over till it seemed to me that Mr. Helder must be the cause."

Ursula raises her head and looks at her aunt, she sees the sweet blue eyes full of tears.

"You are very good to me," she says, "you are all very good to me, and I don't deserve it." There comes a little penitent sob, and then another vehement kiss.

"Oh, aunt," she whispers, "I am so happy! and do you know"—she nestles her face quite close to hide her blushing face and her shame at the avowal—"he says he has loved me ever since that day at the Museum, and he stayed away because he thought I cared for Frank."

"I am very glad indeed, dear; but if he said that, why need you have worried just now."

"I don't know," says Ursula, dreamily; "I feel—I cannot tell you how I feel, aunt—he says he is sure we shall never misunderstand each other any more."

Miss Ashton sighs; she does not want to damp Ursula's joy, but she has misgivings about this.

"How soon are you to be married, my dear child?"

"Oh, aunt! not for ever so long. Why, we have only known each other such a short time; and aunt"—she shrinks closer to her aunt—"I don't want to be married; I shall be quite happy if I see him every day."

Miss Ashton smiles. "You will not think so long, dear. He will soon be more to you than all beside, and you will feel the need to be with him."

Her aunt's words jar, they seem so matter-of-fact.

"I feel he is my life already; but I am too shy of

him to care about being married. He says in six months, but that will be before Christmas."

"Well, never mind, we'll not say any more about it now"—her aunt kisses her; "you may be sure it will all come right. You must do as he wishes, my dear child, and then you will be quite happy. Good night, and go to sleep as fast as you can!"

Ursula opened the door for her aunt with most unusual courtesy, and then she sat down before her glass and brushed her hair vigorously.

"Dear Aunt Sophy, how kind she is to me; I will try and be kinder to her. How good of her to care for my happiness so much. I wonder what papa thinks?" Then she takes a long look at her face, and pushes the veil of hair aside with both hands. "Why does he like my face so much? I don't think there is much to like in it. My mouth is not a regularly pretty mouth, it's too large, and my nose is too small, and I have not even a high forehead. My eyes—well, they used to say they were great staring eyes when I was little; perhaps I have tolerable eyebrows, and my eyelashes are long, but then I don't think these are enough to make any one pretty. Why does he love me? What can have taken his fancy in me?—oh, how vain I am." She covers her face and blushes. "No, it is not the same vanity now. I am all his, certainly. I shall begin to love myself because I am his, only I wish I were taller, grander, better, more worthy of him. And yet I like being afraid of him, and feeling so inferior; it is a delicious feeling. When I am his wife I shall 'worship' him from morning till night. Oh, how happy I am!"

If Michael Helder could have seen the perfect happiness in her face when she said this, he would have been more than content.

Aunt Sophy's meditation was less satisfactory. She did not look at herself in the glass, she opened a drawer and took out a likeness of Ursula's mother. It was very like Ursula, but there was less intensity of expression: it was gentler and far less intelligent.

"Poor child!" Miss Ashton sighed; "I hope she will be as happy as her mother was. But then Ursula expects more from life than her mother did; she is so difficult to satisfy." She kissed the little picture, and put it carefully back in its wrappings. "I wish the engagement had not been so hurried; and yet if Mr. Helder is so clever, he may understand Ursula, and so be more able to make her happy than I have been. Well, in six months they may see much of one another, but she has been seeing Frank for quite six months, and they don't understand one another. Poor Frank! I am afraid he will not like this. I wish he would come and see us. He told me once he was sure that unless Ursula marries some one she loves very much, she may turn out very badly. She does love Mr. Helder, I think; but then she is so young, and she has seen so few people." Aunt Sophy went to sleep with a vague fear at her heart for her niece's future.

CHAPTER XV.—MISS FRASER LEARNS THE TRUTH.

THERE could scarcely be a greater contrast than that between the Brompton cottage and the Bloomsbury house, and Michael felt this keenly on the evening after his visit to Vine Cottage.

At Brompton the rooms were small and shabbily furnished; but there were quaint tables and chairs, and here and there shelves fixed up in tasteful positions,

and bits of old china set thereon, and there were one or two choice water-colour drawings. There was nothing smart, or cheap, or commonplace, but there was little which might not have been better of its kind.

In the old house in Bloomsbury only three of the many sitting-rooms had been furnished, but in these all was good and expensive; rich carpets, sombre curtains hanging in massive folds, and plenty of carved oak furniture suited to the style of the house. In all the rooms the dark oak chimney-pieces reached nearly to the ceiling, and the shelf that ran across them was far too high up to set a looking-glass on; instead, in the room which the cousins occupied when they were together, and which Miss Fraser called the parlour, there were Nankin jars and Delft plates, the blue making a fine contrast to the dark wood behind it. This room was surrounded by dwarf bookshelves, and on the narrow ledge a-top was a variety of curiosities in china, pottery, bronze, Indian and other foreign treasures, which Mr. Helder and his father had collected. There was more in the way of taste here than in any other room in the house, but Michael looked round it and thought how very different it might look—and would look in the future.

Rachel Fraser was thoroughly methodical, so neat that she could not bear a book out of its place; but her love of order defeated taste. Things that matched in size must stand opposite, and all must stand straight.

In her own sitting-room she did not allow anything superfluous, the china and other ornaments in the parlour were a concession to Michael, though, as she said, they took up the maid's time and were in constant risk of breakage.

But Mr. Helder thought as he looked round this evening, how dull life had been all these years; it was true all was order and routine, but the motion in the house was like that of a machine, there was none of the warmth and glow and sparkle that struck him at Vine Cottage. "And yet Rachel is not dull," he thought; "she is much more clever than Miss Ashton—she has far more conversation. What makes the difference, I wonder?"

He had not decided whether he should tell Miss Fraser of his engagement, or whether he should wait awhile.

"We shall never be so comfortable together after. Rachel will think me foolish, because of course she can't see my darling as I see her; and we are so happy together that it is best to let things go on as they are till nearer the time." He was so full of love that he was impatient to brush away the quiet web of his previous life, and begin that which was so utterly untried. But the question of telling Miss Fraser was already decided against his resolution. Even while he sat there, book in hand, seeming to read, and wishing it was bedtime, his cousin had been planning the best way of bringing out her news.

"Michael,"—she cleared her throat in a way which to Michael was ominous of some domestic mischance—"who do you think I walked home from church with this evening?"

"I don't know; I saw you had some one with you, so I went on alone."

"Yes, I hoped you would have stopped"—this was said rather stiffly for Rachel; she had been disappointed not to introduce her cousin to this newly-found friend,—"it was Jane Greville. I have not seen her for years; and now she has come from Wales to stay

with her brother. He is a clergyman at Brompton, and she seems to know your new friends."

"Who do you mean by 'new friends'? I have known Mr. Williams for years."

His eyes went down on his book again, but his cousin was not looking at him; she had made up her mind to an act of duty, and she stared hard at one of the carved oak figures that supported the mantel-shelf.

"I don't mean Mr. Williams. Jane says Miss Ashton is a sweet, harmless sort of person, but totally unfit to bring up her niece. You did not tell me of her eccentricity."

"I do not consider her eccentric."

It was a pity his cousin did not look at him; his eyes and his mouth would both have warned her she had ventured on an unsafe topic. She went on staring at the oak figure.

"Ah, you know, Michael, you have not been accustomed to girls; and from what I hear this Ursula Williams is a most difficult person to understand. It seems that her aunt is afraid of her, and the only way she manages her is by giving way to her in everything. No one dares contradict her."

"Indeed! what a pity Jane Greville is so ill-natured." He was trying to restrain his anger.

"Ill-natured! my dear Michael; she only repeats what she hears, and these other Grevilles have known Ursula Williams ever since she was a child. Jane says her nieces have tried to be sociable with the girl, but she is so dictatorial and so reserved and odd, that they do not get beyond acquaintanceship. Now, Michael, I saw these Greville girls last year at the Royal Academy, and their father introduced them to me. I thought them extremely nice and well-mannered."

"So I imagine; quite 'proper young women'"—he got up and stood facing his cousin; "I had better tell you at once, Rachel, that the ordinary type of young lady would very possibly misunderstand Ursula Williams." A certain pleading wistfulness in Rachel's eyes at sight of his frowning brows made him pause and check the indignation she had awakened. "You will understand her, I am sure"—he said this with an effort at friendliness which his cousin, all unsensitive as she was, felt and shrank from—"I had better tell you at once, Rachel, that—she is very dear to me. She—it has been brought about sooner than I intended—but she has promised to be my wife."

He kept his eyes fixed by an irresistible attraction on her face; it seemed to stiffen into stone. Her eyes were fixed on his, but the pleading look was gone, all expression but that of a strong stare had left them, and Michael thought, as other men have thought before him in such a case, how disagreeable and hard a woman can look when she is not pleased.

He had no idea of her real feelings, or of the pain he had given, and Rachel knew this, and it made her pain harder to bear. She had gone on telling herself Michael was all to her, and that she was nothing to him, but she had not realised it. Now it came upon her, not in words, but as a living fact, against which no doubt availed; and yet, spite of the sharp pain, the woman in Rachel Fraser prevailed, and she tried to hide her wound out of sight, so that it might not grieve him.

"Your wife, Michael?" she spoke timidly; "surely, she is very young?"

Michael Helder was still irritated, and it may be

a secret consciousness that his choice had been sudden and unwise added to his vexation.

"That is my business," he said, quickly. "She is eighteen, and I am thirty-five; but this difference will diminish as she grows older."

The words brought a smile into his face; it was so difficult to think of his bright-eyed Ursula grown old and tame.

"Well"—his cousin felt a little hurt, for she was striving to atone for what, after all, had been said in ignorance—"I wish you joy heartily, Michael; but I suppose you are not to be married at once."

"Oh no, not for six months." Then he turned and took a minute survey of the Nankin jar nearest him. Love does make a man, for the time, cold and selfish to his kindred, but still there are revolutions against this tyranny. One of these came to Michael Helder now.

He came up to his cousin and took her hand. "I hope you and Ursula will be great friends," he smiled. "I fancy you will like her, and I want her to be just as clever as you are, Rachel, if, indeed, that is possible." He dropped her hand again. She smiled, but her lips quivered. "I dare say"—he turned his eyes away—"you think I have kept this very quiet, and that I might have told you sooner, but I really hardly knew my own mind—I mean I had no hope she would listen to me." Miss Fraser shrugged her shoulders, but he did not see it. "I found I had grown attached to her, and so I stayed away, and then was asked down yesterday, and then—why I believe I could not help it. I know you sometimes think I have been foolish and hasty; only don't say so in this case, there's a good soul."

If he could only have known the pain he gave he would have been truly sorry, but this kind of tragedy is tragic only to one heart; the other is so wrapped in its own joy that its sympathy sleeps.

"I could never think you foolish." Try as she would there was sadness in her voice, a sadness that jarred him, and struck one clanging funeral note amid his joy bells. "You seem to have been hasty, but, of course, in six months you will have time to learn more about each other. Did you say you were asked down to Brompton yesterday?"

"Yes; I saw Williams at the Museum, and he asked me."

"Ah!" said Miss Fraser.

Michael Fraser turned the gas higher, and then he went back to his book.

He told himself he was disappointed in Rachel. He thought she would have been heartier in her congratulations, more interested. Why, she had not asked a question about Ursula. However, marriage always caused discussion in a family, and in the end Rachel could not help loving her. Why, a strong-minded woman like that would be able to make such a timid, childish, loving creature as Ursula love her easily.

But he was too happy to worry himself; a flood of light and sunshine seemed to be let into his life. When he got up to light his cousin's candle for her he gave a triumphant glance round the room.

He meant to spend frequent evenings at Vine Cottage.

"It has been so new and sudden," he thought, "that we must see as much of one another as we can."

THE PIONEER FREE PRESS IN ROME.

NOW that Rome is free, the printing-press is busy in the diffusion both of secular and sacred truth. Under the very shadow of St. Peter's the New Testament is being printed. When this is done without let or hindrance the cause of civil and religious freedom is secure.

Before the new order of things has quite obliterated the living remembrance of the condition of Rome under the old Papal and priestly rule, I wish to record a few facts which strongly impressed me years ago, when the issue of the struggle was, humanly speaking, still doubtful.

Could but the little printing-press that spread hope and courage among the citizens of Rome, and at the same time scattered terror in the black ranks of the priesthood, tell the history of its divers resting-places, journeys, and hairbreadth escapes, men would acknowledge it the hero of one of the most exciting tales they ever heard.

A most remarkable fact in connection with that press is, that such good work was steadily done by it when not for a day, or even for an hour, could its employers count on safety either for it or for themselves. If to-day, for instance, it is worked in a grand palazzo by noble and enthusiastic hands, they plan while they work who shall carry it to-morrow to some obscurer refuge, should any fear arise that its present hiding-place is suspected; and this transference to other quarters is always effected in time, owing to the faithfulness and acuteness of the spies

and secret police, whom the Liberals keep in pay to circumvent and outwit those in the service of the Papal Government.

The press works on till night, throwing off hundreds of copies of papers emanating from the "Roman Committee," and thus it furnishes many a young patrician and commoner with pocketfuls of "Decrees," "Instructions," and the like, which they then go out to deliver at the houses of the members with apparent ease and perfect coolness, as if merely making friendly visits, but in fact they are using the circum-spection necessitated by great danger, for they may be said to carry their lives in their hands.

And yet never did this service fail, and never did these poor people, disheartened by the sad ending of the Republic of '48, shrink from the risk of imprisonment or death in their constant efforts after that liberty which for twenty years more seemed so hopelessly far away.

These devoted citizens were but rarely detected by the papalini, partly owing to the great precautions they took, and partly because they had so large a staff of workers that it was possible constantly to change those on duty; while some of these, when their turn was ended, went into the country to avoid notice till again wanted when by a secret sign they were recalled to "the post of danger and of honour," as some have expressed themselves in my hearing.

One very high-spirited man remained for years in

Rome unsuspected, thanks to the subtlety of his arrangements. He had the secret press in his house repeatedly; he gave his rooms for the committee meetings continually; he managed a large part of the money matters. Once he had there the only list of the affiliated in existence, besides other important and compromising papers. He received the reports of the Liberal spies, instructed the secret police, and, besides all this, found time and opportunities to do all desirable bribing among the officials and underlings of the other party! This enormous load of responsibility was not carried so long without leaving many traces, and I always felt he could not see old age. Once they had a sudden message that the *shirri* seemed suspicious, and likely to make instant descent on the house to search it, and immediately the most compromising papers, including, of course, that precious list of members, were placed in the folds of the dress worn by a beautiful girl, who, with flashing eye and trembling heart, went out alone to make visits to friends and to churches through the leaden-footed hours of that long day, till a sign met her in the Corso at evening, which told she could return in peace. The alarm was, happily, a false one; but had the "visit" been made, comparatively little harm would have resulted, owing to the courage of this lovely girl. She, too, suffered in the sequel from the severe strain on the nervous system, and sleeps now in peace far from her native town, where no inscription tells how she did what she could in those troublous times for her country; and yet she surely was a true heroine.

One great fright was caused by the extreme cleverness of an important member in getting himself up as a drover from the Campagna, and by his coming in at an unexpected moment on a market morning in the midst of a special sitting. Of course he had been expected, but not arriving at the time fixed had been given up; the doorkeepers had closed the door and gone in to the meeting, when the announcement that a drover at the door demanded instant speech of the master, caused a panic. It was naturally concluded that he was a spy; there were not enough hiding-places for all the party, so while some of them hid, and the rest planned modes of escape, two ladies, opening the tiny grating in the door, remonstrated with the countryman for coming at market time, "when the master was sure to be out," and then declared "they dared not admit him till later in the day," when he might come and tell his business. As this man was very persistent, and the ladies were naturally even more so, the confab was a long one, and would have lasted longer had not a youth, whose person was unknown to the papal spies, gone to aid the poor ladies, when he fortunately recognised the voice and eyes of the supposed Campagnardo as those of a distinguished Liberal!

Such risks were frequent and unavoidable, and the coming of a real spy on such an occasion as a meeting of this kind would have been a most disastrous *contretemps*.

Our poor little printing-press made its "flittings" in varied styles, and under many and odd auspices. Once it travelled in a humble little donkey-cart, under sundry bales of linen and piles of furniture, to a mediocre house in a very mediocre quarter. The man guiding the donkey was in ignorance of the importance of his cargo, while some members of the society followed at a safe distance to settle it in its new home, and to work off at once the impression of

that day. On another occasion the removal of the press was so very sudden that a vehicle could only be got quickly enough by hailing a vegetable-dealer who at the moment passed along the street calling greens for sale, and asking him to convey a box and basket to a distant street, on some pretence I do not now remember; but I distinctly recollect that after the heavy box had been put underneath and covered by the cauliflowers, which concealed it capitably, the humble turn-out passed along some leading thoroughfares, under the very eyes of the *shirri*, who would have given their ears to get scent of its cargo.

The anniversaries kept by the Romans of the society, as, for example, the day of St. Joseph, in honour of Garibaldi (when, by-the-by, one year they contrived to hoist the Italian tricolour at Monte Mario, and while a patrol was sent out by the governor of Rome to pull it down, they hoisted a second and a third within the city), and other days in honour of different martyrs of liberty, were especially hated by the priestly government. As these great celebrations consisted only of promenades made at given places by thousands of persons, it was impossible to interfere, and yet the organisation was so perfect that at a given hour the Pincio, or the road outside Porta Pia, or the Corso itself, would be gradually peopled by troops of persons who were dressed in mourning or wore a certain flower. They did not fraternise or talk amongst the groups, but simply paraded quietly up and down the space agreed upon till the appointed time for dispersing, when they all dissolved away in the same mysterious manner as they had congregated. The only trace left consisted of shreds of printed paper, that by some inscrutable agency always strewed the precise spot fixed upon by these patient people for the demonstration. When priestly orders were issued against the wearing of violets, and even leaves, as revolutionary, the ingenuity of the people found a yet more expressive decoration in the vulcanite ornaments then coming into use. The ladies bought long chains of this mourning material, and after adding a large cross wore the chain in three turns round the neck, which to them signified "slavery and mourning under the tiara." About these, I believe, no priestly fulmination ever appeared, for although quite aware of the meaning tacitly attached to them, no Jesuit could have framed any objection that his Church could decently put forward as against these religious emblems dedicated to St. Peter. I have seen ladies, not content with a double set of very large chains round the throat, wear two more sets on the wrists to represent manacles! The men used the same materials for watch-guards, with the same "sentiment" regarding it.

Referring to a time yet further back, there can be no doubt that the "occupation" by France, after the crushing of the Roman Republic, was most distasteful to many officers of the army of occupation, and it is pleasant to record the fact that some of them used their almost despotic power in favour of the poor Liberals, and to aid and protect the Secret Committee, while the publications of the Secret Press were very frequently given to them as soon as printed. Money doubtless will do wonders, but it outdid itself in those days when, in the great majority of cases of political imprisonment, it ministered food, medicine, letters, clothing, and escape to the sufferers. This will show how utterly venal the underlings of a

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rotten government can be, and at the same time what tact, perseverance, and daring must have been always manifested by the agents of the committee. Some instances of rescue from even capital punishment occurred. It was said that the mysterious blowing-up of a prison which held a poor political offender, was done with gunpowder and match fired by anxious ones who, failing with the usual gentler means of escape, were at last fain to take the desperate resolve to make this attack that might indeed succeed, but that might possibly fail, and that would only too surely expose all concerned to recognition and capture.

Many Roman families were broken up in those days by the departure of such of their members as could no longer bear the yoke which so sorely chafed them. Some went to distant towns, some to distant lands, and those remaining behind continued to share in all the duties and dangers of their party; but those outside suffered great anxiety on behalf of those inside whenever any specially dangerous enterprise was in hand, and this was increased by the difficulty of procuring information, owing to the many obstacles placed in the way of any person desiring to quit the city, and who offered the only safe channel of communication. All this will sound strange to modern English ears, but indeed, unless a man was supposed to belong somehow to the Codini, he found it most troublesome to get outside the city.

In the first place, on applying for his passport he must name the precise town he intended visiting, and give reasons for his desire to go there. Then, again, he had to pay for the passport, and the cost was calculated on a system which made it cheaper to go to a very distant city in the Papal States than to a far less distant city in Tuscany; so, of course, the shrewd Romans took advantage of their shepherds, and when they meditated a visit to fair and freethinking Florence, applied for a permit endorsed for religious Bologna! This system was in use during the sittings of the Vatican Council, and lasted till its close and the entry of King Victor's army.

When a Liberal applied for a passport, the chances were he would be told that he could get permission to depart only, and as a condition of receiving that must sign an undertaking never to return. This cruel device cost Rome many a fine youth, who, unable to support longer the degrading servitude of his life, preferred signing this deed of exile which separated him from all his dear ones, but gave him freedom and self-respect. In one such painful case, a gentleman soon after his departure heard of the death of his mother, a brother, and a sister, in succession, with whom he had not the consolation of exchanging one parting word; these blows were followed by the loss of his devoted wife, and thus he stood quite alone among strangers, with no prospect of alleviation; for the aged father was so broken by his sorrows that no member of the family felt it right to quit him, and the poor exile lived in constant dread of hearing that his father had likewise passed away. The sadness of that man's face was touching, and the mention of his wrongs always brought tears to his eyes, and sometimes (can you wonder?) maledictions to his lips.

How bright to him must have seemed that memorable day when he climbed the ascent to the Capitol in company with the hundreds of exiled Romans who

poured into their beloved city at the breach by the Porta Pia!

One noble family of my acquaintance was connected with every branch of the secret movement for freedom, and much did they suffer and sacrifice in its cause. Some of them resided in the kingdom, having signed the undertaking described above, while the rest lived in the old family palace in Rome. As no open steps were ever taken against them, the circumspection they used in every relation of life must have been very great; and yet the younger men were amongst the most active and audacious agents of the committee. One in particular, a bright, impulsive, and witty youth, was nearly every day the bearer of compromising papers to the gayest and most fashionable among the affiliated, with whom naturally he had relations in society. I have always thought he owed his freedom from suspicion to the fact that he could, and frequently did, "serve the mass" (*i.e.*, do the part of deacon) with great effect and appropriate gravity; but, however that may have been, he still lives to sneer at the dulness of the priests, who, habitually using their profession as a cloak, did not remember that their pupils might profit by the lesson!

To live in continual anxiety about one another became the unavoidable lot of this distracted family; and although their position and connections gave them means of communication not enjoyed by many, it sometimes happened that they were driven to use odd expedients for getting news into or out of the town. A lady, whom I shall call the Marchesa Francesca, was once their courageous forlorn hope, so to speak, when repeated family consultations could devise no method by which any of the gentlemen might venture out to enjoy a luxury rare indeed in those troubled times, and to keep a rendezvous fixed for a certain day at a country place many miles off, where two of their exiled ones had planned to meet them. The message from outside had arrived too late to give time to arrange a good excuse for going out of the town, and the awakening of suspicion by unexpected movements was not to be thought of. So the marchesa declared she would go at all hazards, but she had no doubt a permit to go to a town so near their estate for a few days would not be refused to a lady so well known, and one connected, too, with various dignitaries of the Church. But though her wish to visit the estate was intimated in the most carefully careless and informal way to a chief in the department by a very deeply-dyed *black*, who, of course, did not know why the marchesa had taken the whim to go, the permit was refused her. In this strait her affection overcame every other feeling, and she planned a daring act which happily was favoured by her well-known habit of keeping much at home. She came to the resolution of going alone and secretly to the rendezvous. One morning, therefore, she sent a parcel of personal necessities to a man who acted as a carrier between Rome and Z, desiring the packet should be given to one of her family residing at Z; and in the afternoon she left home very quietly dressed in black, with parasol in hand, as if simply going for the usual drive. That day the carriage was only a light one, drawn by a pony, and the driver and only other occupant was one of the gentlemen. They drove out of Rome by a gate on the opposite side from Z, and, toward the Ave Maria, followed a road that led very circuitously to that which the carrier's cart would take, and on that road, at some

distance from the city, the lady was set down with the understanding that the return should be managed in the same way. I have heard that lady tell how her eyes grew dim and her heart beat fast and loud on finding herself left by her departing relative in that dreary road at dusk in solitude. Only those who know how rarely Italian ladies venture out singly even in towns, can picture her agitation; but she had, notwithstanding, to walk on as unconcernedly as possible, till by-and-by the carrier's cart overtook her, when she made signs that he must stop and take her up.

By good fortune a back seat was vacant, and the marchesa quietly took that, saying nothing beyond "good evening" in the customary way. They presently reached a boundary where the *shirri* demanded "passports," and she, trusting to fortune or the chapter of accidents, feigned at that critical moment to be fast asleep, and was not aroused by the alighting of all the passengers. On finding herself alone in the dark part of the cart, she began to hope to remain undiscovered, but the *shirri* presently came to seek smuggled goods, and found the sleeping marchesa. As they could get no reply from the veiled figure, they called the carrier to their aid, and that man, with the ready wit of his race, instantly suspecting something of the truth, replied composedly that as she was his friend he would answer for her papers being in order, but as she was so very tired after her visit to Rome he did not think it worth while to wake her.

Soon after the cart had once more started, the marchesa took an opportunity of raising her veil for a moment, when the astonished carrier recognised the padrona, or owner of a town in which he was a

tenant. At the next village he helped the lady to get the regular permit to go farther on (this could not be refused to any person desiring it), and the next day she safely reached the rendezvous, but greatly alarmed her relatives by this unexpected appearance, for their first idea was that everybody else being arrested, she alone had been able to secrete herself and escape.

They talked day and night till the time came for separation; and as this had been the first long interview for two years, there was very much to tell and to hear which could not prudently have been told by letters. It was a sad parting, for all knew it would be far more difficult for the marchesa to return to Rome unrecognised, because the carrier passed the last guard by morning instead of evening light; and recognition in this case would entail imprisonment on herself, banishment at least on the rest of the family, and confiscation of all the property they possessed in the Papal dominions.

However, the old saw that "fortune favours the brave" held good in the present instance, for the *shirri* were again put off with some story, and after a few anxious hours spent waiting on the cross road till afternoon, the pony chaise reappeared in charge of its former driver, who was overjoyed to be relieved from the great anxiety suffered during the absence of his courageous relative. They reached home, chatting gaily as if after a pleasant drive, and I believe the history of those days was never known beyond the household; which may not be a very pleasant piece of news for the ecclesiastic who, in those days, was chief of the police department at Monte Citorio.

N.

THOMAS BRASSEY.

THE life of Mr. Thomas Brassey, whose biography has been lately written by Sir Arthur Helps, abounds with striking facts, and affords many valuable lessons to all engaged in the planning and execution of work of any kind, or in the employment of workers.* He became one of the richest men of the age, without ever being eager after money, and was perhaps the richest man without exception who ever really earned the wealth of which he became possessed. There may have been men who amassed larger sums, but they were men who grew rich by speculation rather than by work. Mr. Brassey had no taste or liking for speculation, rather disliked it, in fact, and preferred to win his way by labour of hand and brain. He was born, in 1805, of a good and ancient family; was articled to a land surveyor at the age of sixteen; won favour of his employer by industry, obedience, and attention to business; became afterwards his partner, and ultimately, after his partner's death, his successor in the business and agency at Birkenhead.

During his term of service young Brassey had made himself practically familiar with all the minutest details of his profession both as surveyor and constructor of works and buildings. From the confidence which his employer had fearlessly and justly reposed in him, he had learned to rely upon himself, instead of having recourse in cases of doubt

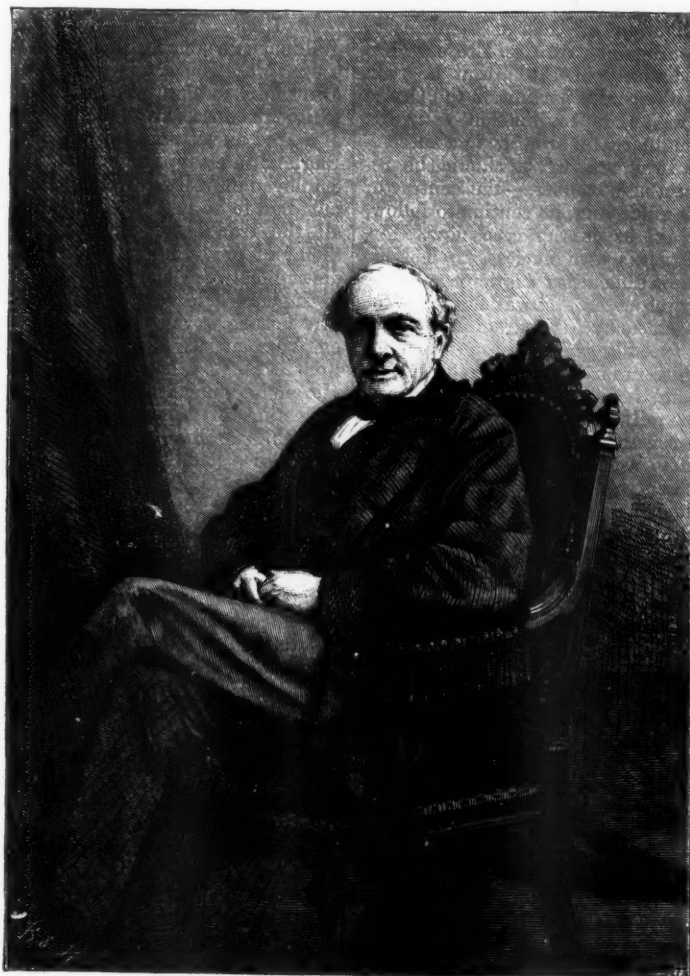
to others, and in all cases of difficulty he had shown astonishing ingenuity and fertility of resource. He had resided about eight years in Birkenhead, when an accident brought him into contact with the celebrated George Stephenson—a circumstance which gave the colour and direction to his future life—a life of unwearied prosperous action, and of success achieved by the accomplishment of works of unexampled importance, of colossal enterprise, and unprecedented difficulty. Of the events of that long and successful career our limits will prevent us from taking more than a desultory view. What we shall rather aim at will be to exhibit Mr. Brassey in connection with and relation to his work—to show what a real, hearty, thoroughgoing worker he was, and what were his ideas concerning work, and how work ought to be done.

We cannot do better than follow the example of his biographer, and, before passing on to the consideration of the man's work, just see for a moment what sort of stuff the man was made of who did the work. The work of a man is the outcome of his character; and looking at the character of Mr. Brassey, we may judge what his work was likely to be. The first trait which strikes us is his thoroughness; he would go through with the thing he had begun, in spite of difficulties and obstacles; and it was probably to this grand persistency of will, coupled as it was with decisiveness of action, that he owed a large measure of his success. Then, he was

* "Life and Labours of Thomas Brassey." By Sir Arthur Helps. Bell and Daldy.

naturally a gentleman—courteous, kind-hearted, genial, liberal in all his dealings, and ever generous when generosity was called for. He must have been a man of close observation, for he possessed in a high degree the rare faculty of discerning character;

was very chary in ascribing blame, and when he did blame, did so with tenderness and evident reluctance. He seems to have had no resentments—for he would not quarrel: throughout his long career of business he never had but one lawsuit, and that was against



From a Photograph by
R. Ewing, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

Thomas Brassey

and this he proved in the selection of his agents, who were almost invariably found to possess the qualifications for carrying out his designs. His trustfulness was no less remarkable than his judgment; indeed, he placed implicit confidence in the men of his choice, never vexing them by complaints or wearying them by needless criticism or interference. He had rare presence of mind, and a calm, equable temperament, which enabled him, after giving his best efforts to ensure success, to await the result without anxiety. When anything went wrong, he

his will, he being dragged into it by his partner, and he declared he would never have another. He wrote thousands of letters, and in all his enormous correspondence there is not a single expression of rancour or ill-will. He had a wonderful memory for the facts and details of his business; he made no notes or memoranda, and was never at fault for want of them; he had remarkable powers of calculation and organisation; he liked to settle disputes between his agents and engineers by arbitration, and would choose for arbitrators the working men. Like most

celebrated men, he had a ruling passion, which was to deserve and to gain a high reputation for skill and success in his difficult vocation.

In the year 1834 the formation of the English railways had fairly begun. It was inevitable that Mr. Brassey, looking to his antecedents, his aspirations, and his capacities for such labours, should take a prominent part in this great national enterprise. It was at the instigation of George Stephenson, seconded by the encouragement of Mrs. Brassey (Mr. Brassey had married wisely in 1831), that he took his first contract for a ten-mile portion of the Grand Junction Railway, which, in conjunction with Mr. Locke, the famous engineer, he brought to a successful conclusion. Railway making, it should be remembered, was then a new business—the contractor had no precedents to guide him, no routine to follow, no grooves to run in, as is the case now. Mr. Brassey had to follow his own devices, to feel his way, and to meet new difficulties as they arose by the invention of new resources. It was fortunate for him that it was so, since by his extraordinary fertility in resource he speedily gained a reputation for skill as well as for punctuality and despatch. Other contracts followed, and he seems to have been busy on English lines of railway down to the close of 1840. Engaged on several lines at once, he had, of course, many agents to represent him, and these he relied upon so confidently that they could and did act, in cases of sudden urgency involving large outlays, without consulting him, well knowing that he would approve their zeal. In making sub-contracts, without which railway work could not be carried on with anything like despatch, Mr. Brassey's plan was simple and characteristic. He would not bargain or higggle with a sub-contractor; his habit was to point to the work, and say, "There is so-and-so to be done for so much; will you go into it?" The offer was almost invariably accepted, for the simple reason that each man knew well enough that Mr. Brassey would not allow him to work without a fair wage, and that if from a mistake or any unforeseen cause the contract should turn out a losing one, he would make it up in some way or other. In fact, mistakes of this kind occurred not unfrequently. Thus, on one occasion where a man had contracted for a cutting on the supposition that the soil was clay, and after working a few days came suddenly upon a rock—instead of throwing up his contract, as he might perhaps have done under some other employer, he went on doggedly with the work until Mr. Brassey should come his usual round. He came, and saw: "This is very hard," he said to the sub-contractor. "Yes, a pretty deal harder than I bargained for," replied the other. "What is your price for this cutting?" "So much a yard, sir." "It is plain you are not getting it out at that price; have you asked for any advance on account of the rock?" "Yes, sir; but I can do nothing in it." "Well, I am glad you have persevered with it; but I shall not alter your price—the rock shall be measured twice over for you; will that do?" "Yes, very well indeed, and I am very much obliged to you, sir." Such inspections of the line in progress were as regular as the day, and were eagerly looked for by the workers, to all of whom his face was familiar, and he would salute even the navvies by their names. In making his sub-contracts, Mr. Brassey acted on the principle of "every man to his trade," and never liked to let two descriptions of work to one man. On the same

principle it was that he disapproved of his sub-contractors themselves making sub-lettings, though he could not always prevent their so doing. He encouraged the co-operative system—allowed all his agents a share in his profits; and approved of the gang system, by which a certain number of men work in companionships and divide their joint earnings among them.

In 1841 Mr. Brassey, in conjunction with Mr. William Mackenzie, undertook the construction of the railway from Paris to Rouen. This was his first essay in a foreign land, and the undertaking necessarily introduced him to new difficulties and obstacles of a kind as yet uncopied with. France had not, like England, a class of men like the navvies ready to be employed on railway work. As a consequence, workmen had to be brought from England, and there was all the trouble of transporting them, of lodging them, of providing medical attendance, and of mediating between them and the French lower classes in the unavoidable collisions which occurred at first. The French workmen soon flocked to the railway for employment, as indeed did labourers of other nationalities. At one time there were as many as eleven languages spoken on the line, the workers consisting of English, Irish, Highlanders, Welsh, French, German, Belgians, Dutch, Piedmontese, Spaniards, and Poles. As the English were the general instructors and had to train the rest, it may be easily imagined they had no small trouble at the beginning in making themselves understood. In fact, their proceedings were a sort of pantomime. The navy pointed to the earth or other material to be moved, then to the waggon into which it had to be shovelled, stamped with his foot, and shouted out a certain shibboleth which we need not repeat, by which time the foreigner would see his drift, and set about the job. This sort of thing, however, did not last; ere long a kind of composite language sprung up, the spontaneous product of necessity, a curious jargon comparable to the Pigeon English spoken by the Chinese of the sea-board, and yet having a kind of unity, and a grammar of its own; it proved of essential service, and was even learned by the country people in their intercourse with the railway labourers.

The introduction of English labour into France was a great advantage to French labourers, chiefly because they were thus taught the use of better tools, and better methods than they had been before acquainted with; and what is here said of France may be said of all other European peoples among whom railways were constructed by Englishmen. It was thought at first by contractors that continental labour would be much cheaper than English labour, wages being so much lower; but it was found in practice that labour is pretty nearly the same price throughout the whole of Europe; because, when low wages are paid, there is very little work done for the wage. In many cases the English example operated on the foreigner, so that the French, Italian, or German workman, who at first was worth but two or three francs a day, became ere long worth double the money.

In 1843, the Paris and Rouen Railway being finished, the construction of the Rouen and Havre Railway, a continuation of the same line, was commenced. The works on this line were of extraordinary magnitude, including bridges (one over the River Seine), tunnels, and long and lofty viaducts,

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to all which works Mr. Brassey, who had removed to France with his wife, gave his constant personal supervision. In consequence of the short time allowed for the completion of the whole, it was necessary to work day and night, and the duties of supervision were most exacting. Shortly before the proposed opening of the line, the Barentin Viaduct, a huge brick structure a hundred feet high and a third of a mile in length, which had been erected at a cost of some fifty thousand pounds, came toppling down, owing, it is supposed, to rapid execution in bad weather, and the use of an inferior sort of lime in the composition of the mortar. This untoward event was of course immensely mortifying; but instead of brooding over it, or going to law as they might have done, to settle the question of responsibility, Mr. Brassey and his partner set to work immediately to build it up again. "Not a day was lost by them in the extraordinary efforts they had to make to secure millions of new bricks, and to provide hydraulic lime, which had to be brought from a distance;" and such was their energy and determination, that they succeeded in rebuilding this huge structure in less than six months. The above is a typical instance of the way in which Mr. Brassey was wont to meet difficulty or disaster. Whenever they occurred, he met them with a cheerful face. "When he had suffered a severe loss," says one of his agents, "he appeared quite happy, and would rub his hands, so that any one would have supposed he was delighted rather than otherwise."

Mr. Brassey's continental labours, though they form but a comparatively small part of the work of his life, were sufficiently numerous, and occupied him at intervals to the last. They consist of railway works in France, Spain, Italy, Norway, Holland, Denmark, Poland, and Austria. In other quarters of the globe also—as in India, Mauritius, Australia, South America, and Canada—he has left enduring monuments of his enterprise and skill. We have not space to describe these several works, but we may quote one or two examples of the obstacles which sometimes had to be dealt with, and which will partly serve to show what sort of men Mr. Brassey had succeeded in attaching to his interests.

While constructing the Spanish railway from Bilbao to Tudela, in 1858, one great difficulty was that of getting the money to pay the men. The money was partly a debased metal coinage, and a ton or a ton and a half weight of it would be wanted on pay-day. When the pay week came, Mr. Tapp, the secretary, used to send a carriage or coach drawn by four or six mules, with a couple of guards, one of the clerks from the office, a man to drive, and a sort of stable-man to help in case the mules were troublesome. He dreaded the operation of getting this money out to the works, and was always in a state of anxiety until it had arrived. More than once the conveyance came to grief: once the axle of the carriage broke in half from the weight of the money, and he had to send a couple of omnibuses to divide the load. On one occasion there was a conspiracy to plunder the convoy, but that danger was avoided by the driver taking a different route. On this Bilbao line one of the sub-contractors was a certain Carlist chief, whom the Government dared not arrest on account of his great influence. This fellow got into difficulties and made a demand on Mr. Small, the district agent, for a large sum. Mr. Small offered him the amount that was really due to him. He

would not take it, but insisted on his demand, and brought up all his men, who bivouacked round the office: they slept in the street and stayed there all night. When Mr. Small attempted to ride out they pulled him off his horse and pushed him back. He passed the night in terror, expecting every minute to be massacred with his family. He managed, however, to send for assistance to Bilbao, and the governor of the town sent a detachment of troops, who dispersed the gang. The Carlist chief had threatened to kill every person in the house; rather an alarming threat from a brave who had already killed fourteen persons with his own hand.

During the construction of the Danish railway in 1863, occurred the war on the Schleswig-Holstein question, and the contractors, as might be expected, had an evil time of it. The Danish Government seized the rolling-stock of the company, and compelled the sub-contractors to assist in making the military earthworks. The railway banks were formed into regular fortifications, and had to suffer bombardment. To quote the statement of the agent, "the combatants on either side had no compunction in seizing the contractors' materials, and in compelling their people to work for them."

In Austria the Lemberg and Czernewitz line was in course of completion during the fierce war with Prussia which culminated at Sadowa. The works were at that time progressing at Lemberg, a distance of five hundred miles from Vienna. The difficulty was how to get the money from Cracow to Lemberg to pay the men. The intervening country was occupied by the Austrian and Prussian armies, who were on each side of the line. However, Mr. Ofenheim (Mr. Brassey's representative) was full of energy, and was determined to get on somehow or other. He was told there was no engine; that they had all been taken off; but he went and found an old engine in a shed. Then, when he had also found an engine-driver, the man said he would not go, for he had a wife and children; but Mr. Ofenheim said, "If you will come, I will give you so many hundred florins, and if you get killed I will provide for your wife and family." They jumped on to the old engine and got up the steam. Then they started and went at the rate of forty or fifty miles an hour, and passed between the sentinels of the opposing armies, who were so taken aback at their apparition that they had not time to fire at them. Thus the money was got to Lemberg, and the men were paid, who would otherwise have gone away to their homes, and the line would have been left unfinished through the winter. This conduct of Mr. Ofenheim's is a notable instance of the influence Mr. Brassey exercised over those who worked with him or for him. The Emperor of Austria was much struck with this daring feat of getting to Lemberg, and sending for Mr. Ofenheim, he asked this pertinent question: "Who is this Mr. Brassey, this English contractor, for whom men are to be found who work with such zeal and risk their lives?" The answer must have been satisfactory, for the emperor said Mr. Brassey must be a very powerful man, and sent him the Cross of the Iron Crown.

We are necessarily debarred from any detailed notice of the numerous engagements which Mr. Brassey entered into. He was never at leisure, never unoccupied, as the reader will readily conceive when he learns that between the years 1834 and 1870 (the last year of his life), he carried out no

fewer than a hundred and seventy contracts, many of them entailing works of vast labour and gigantic proportions. Before he had been many years at his business he had been unavoidably diverted from the active personal superintendence of particular works, and was rather occupied in the general supervision of many going on at the same time. There were periods in his career during which he and his partners were giving employment to eighty thousand persons upon works requiring for their completion seventeen millions of capital. Of the great enterprises in which he was engaged, we can refer only to a few which appear to demand special notice. The Great Northern Railway, which was commenced in 1847 and finished in 1851, was a work of much difficulty, employing from five to six thousand hands. A part of the line had to be carried through the Fen district over a soil which shook and trembled beneath the feet; to render it firm some hundred acres of faggot wood, arranged with peat in alternate layers, had to be sunk in the soft mass, by which means the water was expelled, and the ground solidified, so as to bear the weight of the superincumbent railway. On the completion of the whole line, the shareholders acknowledged the services of their contractor by a magnificent testimonial, in the shape of a splendid shield, illustrative of his exploits, executed by Mr. H. P. Burt, and which was exhibited in the Exhibition of 1851. In 1854 Mr. Brassey rendered important service by his counsel and ready assistance in carrying out the railway in the Crimea, in conjunction with Messrs. Peto and Betts. Between 1855 and 1858 he was busy in the construction of the Italian railways, an undertaking which brought him into personal relations with Count Cavour, who afterwards described him as one of the most extraordinary men he had ever known, adding that he would make "a splendid minister of public works." The Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, begun in 1852 and finished in 1859, was one of the most important undertakings in which Mr. Brassey was ever concerned. When he went over to Canada to inspect the operations, he found labour scarce and dear, the wages in Canada being full fifty per cent. higher than the English wages; while in Canada, owing to the severity of the seasons, out-of-door work is impossible during four months of the year. He suggested, on the score of economy, the introduction of French Canadians from Lower Canada, and several large gangs of them were brought to the works accordingly. They were found, however, almost useless, except for the light work; they could not persevere at any heavy task; they would work well enough for about ten minutes, and then, from mere physical feebleness, "they were done." The only way of rendering them at all available was to allow them to fill the ballast waggons as they best could, and give them a ride on the ballast train to the point of discharge and back in the empty trucks. They were not idle fellows, but undersized men, and ill-fed, living only on vegetable food. But Mr. Brassey had also a financial purpose in view in going to Canada. The Canadian Government had lent three millions of money to the Grand Trunk Company; and these three millions had a priority of interest over all other claims upon the shares. Mr. Brassey succeeded in persuading the Canadian Government to remit the priority of their claims, which proved a great assistance to the Company.

The most prominent feature in the Grand Trunk

Railway of Canada is the Victoria Bridge, which crosses the St. Lawrence river near Montreal, at a point where the stream is nearly a mile and a half wide. The structure was carried out from the designs of Messrs. Stephenson and Ross. Owing to the enormous quantity of ice which accumulates in the St. Lawrence during the winter, it was indispensable that the bridge should be capable of dealing with the floes that come down the stream when the ice breaks up in the spring. To effect this, the stone piles of the bridge were placed at wide intervals apart; each pier being of the most substantial character, and having a large wedge-shaped cutwater of stonework slanting towards the current and presenting an angle to the advancing ice sufficient to separate and fracture it as it rises against the piers. Many difficulties had to be encountered, and not a few disasters to be remedied, in the course of the work. There was the opposition of the climate, of which neither contractors nor labourers had had any previous experience; there were repeated strikes among the workmen; then the cholera broke out among them and committed dreadful ravages, and many of the men died. In the face of all such obstacles, however, the work went on with spirit, while it was conducted with unexampled skill. The whole of the ironwork for the tubes was prepared at the Canada Works, Birkenhead, near Liverpool. At this establishment every plate was finished ready to be fitted to its proper place. How thoroughly the operations at Birkenhead were carried out may be judged from the fact that the centre tube of the bridge consisted of 10,309 separate pieces, in which nearly half a million of holes were punched, and not one plate required any alteration, nor was there a single hole punched wrong! This marvellous accuracy was yet essential to success; for any carelessness or failure might have involved the delay of a year in the completion of the bridge, and the loss of heavy sums of money. The following is a summary of the materials used in this stupendous structure:—Weight of iron in the 6,512 feet of tubes, 9,044 tons; number of rivets punched in the tubes, 1,540,000; masonry in the twenty-five piers and abutments, 2,713,095 cubic feet; timber used in the temporary work, 2,280,000 cubic feet; force employed, 3,040 men, six steamboats, and seventy-five barges, representing 12,000 tons and 450 horse-power; 144 horses and four locomotive engines. The first stone was laid on the 20th of July, 1854, and Victoria Bridge was opened for the passage of trains on the 19th of December, 1859, the formal inauguration by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales taking place in the ensuing year.

One of the most important of the later works in which Mr. Brassey was engaged, was the construction of the Argentine Railway, which connects the centre of the Argentine Republic with the Rio de la Plata and the great trading ports of the eastern coast of South America. By the terms of the contract, the contractors were virtually made colonisers, inasmuch as they were guaranteed by the Government the possession of a league of land on each side of the railway throughout nearly its whole course, on the condition that the land should be colonised. The advantages which settlers would enjoy by being placed along this line of railway are too obvious to need pointing out, and there is good reason to expect that ere the lapse of any very long period, this settlement will present the most favourable arena for the

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industrial enterprise of emigrants from Europe. At present, owing to the disturbed political relations between rival South American States, and the consequent impunity with which the native Indians have been allowed to attack and plunder the outlying settlements, it is hardly advisable that intending colonists should penetrate far into the country. It is certain, however, that ere long this objection will cease to exist, as the Indians are too weak to withstand any respectable force, and would be found ready to treat with the Government on reasonable terms. The soil of the country is most excellent, and abounds in valuable indigenous products; and the climate is mild and favourable to the constitution of Europeans, while the facilities for commerce afforded by the railway and the Parana river, present elements of prosperity not equalled by any other available field for colonisation. The coming generation will probably see in the Argentine Republic a new nation growing into power and importance under the impetus of European industry and civilisation.

At length the close of Mr. Brassey's varied labours was approaching. In May, 1867, he was in Paris on business, when he was taken suddenly ill. He insisted, however, the next day, on accompanying some friends who were with him to Cologne, and he returned with them to England in June. In October of the same year, though in feeble health, he started abroad again to be present at the proposed opening of the Mont Cenis Railway. The opening proved a failure, the weather was tempestuous and snowy, and he had to stand about in the cold and wet. In the night he was taken alarmingly ill with bronchitis. The next day he was taken to Turin, in the hope of there getting advice. From Turin he went on to Milan, and from Milan to Venice, where he arrived in a violent fever. Here he was visited by his family, who had been telegraphed for, and who hardly expected to find him alive. But he rallied in a remarkable manner, and even transacted business on his sickbed. In November he was brought slowly home, and took up his residence at St. Leonards, where for some time he continued to pay attention to business. In September of the ensuing year he had a second attack of paralysis; but even this did not prevent him from attending to various matters of business to which he considered himself pledged. His mind was quite at peace. He knew that his disease was fatal, but he had no alarms; the religion of his childhood, we are told, had been the religion of his maturer years, and he clung to it with hopeful trust. The air of Hastings was favourable to him, and there he spent the last days of his life. But his disease was not to be overcome by change of air. He grew rapidly worse; and after much suffering, expired, surrounded by his family, on the 8th of December, 1870.

DREAMS AND DREAMING.

IV.—REMARKABLE DREAMS AND DREAM NARRATIVES.

THE dream narratives in this and the following chapters have been selected as remarkable not only from their details, but also from the circumstance of their being well authenticated by testimony which it is not easy to gainsay. That some of them may be satisfactorily explainable, as belonging to a class of dreams which have a tendency to fulfil themselves, is likely enough; while it is also probable that others

may have been the spontaneous products of the minds of the dreamers, and could be explained, had we any knowledge of the personal experience which preceded the dreams. Others, again, do not seem explainable upon any principles with which we are as yet acquainted.

The following narrative, somewhat abbreviated, is substantially that of the principal witness in a prosecution, the details of which are to be found in the records of the criminal trials of Languedoc. He tells his tale as follows:—"I had been travelling some time on the business of the firm to which I was attached, when, one evening, in the month of June, I arrived at a town in Languedoc, in which I was a stranger. I put up at a suburban inn, and being considerably fatigued, went early to bed, determining to rise betimes in the morning, and proceed to business. I had scarcely got into bed ere from sheer weariness I fell into a profound slumber, and had a dream which made a strong impression upon me. I fancied that I had arrived at the same town, not in the evening as I had really done, but in the middle of the day; that I had put up at the very same inn, and had gone out directly, curious to see what was worth seeing in the place. I walked along the main street into another crossing it at right angles, which appeared to lead into the country. I soon came to a church, and paused a little while to examine its Gothic portico; and then advanced to a bye-path which branched off from the road. I struck into this path, which was winding, rugged, and solitary, and very soon I reached a miserable cottage, standing in a garden covered with weeds. I got into the garden through one of the numerous gaps in the enclosure; and approaching an old well which occupied a distant corner, looked down into it: there I saw distinctly, without any possibility of mistake, a corpse which had been stabbed in several places. I counted the deep wounds, and the wide gashes whence the blood was flowing. I would have cried out, but could not utter a sound; and I awoke, trembling with affright and moist with perspiration—to find that it was a dream.

"I could not again address myself to sleep; and although it was very early, I rose and dressed, resolving to earn by a brisk walk an appetite for my breakfast. I accordingly left the house, and walked along the main street. It was strange, but the place was not new to me; and the farther I walked, the stronger grew the confused recollection of the objects before me. 'This is odd,' I thought, 'I have never been here before, and yet I could swear to these houses as I pass them.' I went on until, coming to the corner of the street, I suddenly recalled my dream; but I put away the thought as too absurd; still, at every step, some fresh point of resemblance struck me. 'Am I still dreaming,' I exclaimed, not without a momentary thrill—'Is the agreement to be perfect to the end?' Before long, I reached the church, which had the same architectural features which had attracted my notice in the dream; and then the high-road, along which I pursued my way, coming at length to the same bye-path that had presented itself to my imagination a few hours before. There was no possibility of doubt or mistake. Every tree, every turn, was familiar to me. I was not at all of a superstitious turn, and was wholly engrossed in the practical detail of commercial business. I had never troubled myself about the hallucinations, the presentiments that science denies and rejects; but I

must confess that I now felt myself spell-bound as by some enchantment; and with Pascal's words on my lips, 'A continued dream would be a reality,' I hastened forward, no longer doubting that the next moment would bring me to the cottage; and this was really the case. In all its outward circumstances it corresponded to what I had seen in my dream. I instantly determined to ascertain whether the coincidence would hold good in every other point. I entered the garden, and went direct to the spot on which I had seen the well; but here the resemblance failed—there was no well. I looked in every direction—examined the whole garden, went round the cottage, which appeared to be inhabited, although no person was visible; but nowhere could I find any vestige of a well. I made no attempt to enter the cottage, but hastened back to the inn, in a state of agitation which may be imagined. I could not make up my mind to pass unnoticed such extraordinary coincidences, but how was any clue to be obtained to the mystery?

"I went to the landlord, and after chatting with him for a time on different subjects, I came to the point, and asked him directly to whom the cottage belonged which was on a bye-road which I described to him. 'It is inhabited,' he said, 'by an old man and his wife, who have the character of being very morose and unsociable. They rarely leave the house—see nobody, and nobody goes to see them; but they are quiet enough, and I never heard anything against them. Of late, their very existence seems to have been forgotten; and I believe that you, sir, are the first person who for years has noticed them.' These details, far from satisfying my curiosity, did but provoke it the more. Breakfast was served, but I could not touch it. I paced up and down the room, looked out of the window, trying to fix my attention on some external object, but in vain. I endeavoured to interest myself in a quarrel between two men in the street, but the garden and the cottage had full possession of my mind, and at last, snatching my hat, I cried, 'I will go, come what may.'

"I repaired to the nearest magistrate, told him the object of my visit, and related the whole circumstance as clearly as I could; and I saw that my statements were not lost upon him. 'It is, indeed, very strange,' he said; 'and after what has happened I do not think I ought to leave the matter without some inquiry. Other business will prevent my accompanying you in a search, but I will place two of the police at your command. Go once more to the hovel, see its inhabitants, and search; perhaps you may make some important discovery.' In a few moments I was on my way, along with the two officers, and we soon reached the cottage. An old man opened the door to us, and received us somewhat uncivilly, but showed no mark of suspicion or emotion when we told him we wished to search the house. 'Very well, gentlemen, as soon as you please,' he replied. 'Have you a well here?' I inquired. 'No, sir; we are obliged to go for water to a spring at a considerable distance.' We searched the house, while I was so excited that I expected each moment to bring to light some fatal secret. The man looked on meanwhile with an air of vacancy, and at length we left the cottage, without finding anything to confirm my suspicions. I resolved to inspect the garden once more; and a number of idlers having by this time collected, drawn to the spot by the sight of the police, I made inquiries of them whether they knew any-

thing about a well in that place. No one replied at first, but at length an old woman came slowly forward, leaning on a crutch. 'A well?' cried she; 'is it the well you are looking after? That has been gone these thirty years. I remember, as if it were but yesterday, how, when I was a young girl, I used to drop stones into it, and listen for the splash they made in the water.' 'And can you say where the well used to be?' I asked. 'As near as I can remember, on the very spot on which your honour is standing,' said the old woman.

"We set to work at once to dig up the ground. At the depth of some two feet we came to a layer of bricks, which being removed, laid bare some beams of timber, below which was the mouth of the well. It was a work of time to get at the secrets of the dark and foetid hole; but at length, from beneath a mass of stones and mud, an old chest was drawn up into the daylight. It was thoroughly decayed and rotten, and needed no locksmith to open it; and we found within what I was certain we should find, and what filled with horror all the spectators, who had not my pre-conceptions—we found the remains of a human body. The police now secured the person of the old man, who had not fled, and after a time discovered his wife concealed in a shed, behind a pile of wood. The old couple were brought before the proper authorities, and privately and separately examined. The old man persisted pertinaciously in declaring his innocence; but his wife at length confessed that, in concert with her husband, she had, a very long time ago, murdered a pedlar whom they had met one night on the high road, and who had been incautious enough to tell them of a considerable sum of money which he had about him, and whom, in consequence, they induced to pass the night at their house. They had taken advantage of the heavy sleep induced by fatigue to strangle him; his body had been put into the chest, the chest cast into the well, and the well stopped up. The pedlar being from another country, his disappearance had occasioned no inquiry. There was no witness of the crime; and as its traces had been carefully concealed from observation, the two criminals had good reason to believe themselves secure from detection. They had not, however, been able to silence the voice of conscience; they fled from the sight of their fellow-men; they trembled at the least noise, while silence filled them with terror. They had often come to the resolution of leaving the scene of their crime—of flying to some distant land; but still some undefinable fascination kept them near the remains of their victim. Terrified by the deposition of his wife, and unable to resist the overwhelming proofs against him, the man finally made a similar confession; and six weeks after the unhappy criminals died on the scaffold, in accordance with the sentence of the Parliament of Toulouse."

The following remarkable dream is related in the "Times" newspaper of 16th August, 1828:—"In the night of the 11th of May, 1812, Mr. Williams, of Scorrier House, near Redruth, in Cornwall, awoke his wife, and, exceedingly agitated, told her that he had dreamed that he was in the lobby of the House of Commons, and saw a man shoot with a pistol a gentleman who had just entered the lobby, and who was said to be the Chancellor: to which Mrs. Williams naturally replied, that it was only a dream, and recommended him to be composed, and go to sleep as soon as he could. He did so, but shortly

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after again woke her, and said that he had a second time had the dream; whereupon she observed that he had been so much agitated with his former dream, that she supposed it had dwelt on his mind, and begged of him to try and compose himself and go to sleep, which he did. A third time the same vision was repeated; on which, notwithstanding her entreaties that he would be quiet, and endeavour to forget it, he arose, it being then between one and two o'clock, and dressed himself. At breakfast the dreams were the sole subject of conversation; and in the forenoon Mr. Williams went to Falmouth, where he related the particulars of them to all of his acquaintance that he met. On the following day, Mr. Tucker, of Trematon Castle, accompanied by his wife, a daughter of Mr. Williams, went to Scorrier House about dusk. Immediately after the first salutation, on entering the parlour where were Mr., Mrs., and Miss Williams, Mr. Williams began to relate to Mr. Tucker the circumstances of his dream; and Mrs. Williams observed to her daughter, Mrs. Tucker, laughingly, that her father could not even suffer Mr. Tucker to be seated before he told him of his nocturnal visitation: on the statement of which Mr. Tucker observed, that it would do very well for a dream to have the Chancellor in the lobby of the House of Commons, but that he would not be found there in reality: and Mr. Tucker then asked what sort of man he appeared to be, when Mr. Williams minutely described him: to which Mr. Tucker replied, 'Your description is not at all that of the Chancellor, but is certainly very exactly that of Mr. Perceval, the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and although he has been to me the greatest enemy I ever met with through life, for a supposed cause which had no foundation in truth, I should be exceedingly sorry to hear of his being assassinated, or of any injury of the kind happening to him.' Mr. Tucker then inquired of Mr. Williams if he had ever seen Mr. Perceval, and was told that he never had seen him, nor had ever even written to him, either on public or private business; in short, that he never had had anything to do with him, nor had he even been in the lobby of the House of Commons in his life. At this moment, whilst Mr. Williams and Mr. Tucker were still standing, they heard a horse gallop to the door of the house, and immediately after, Mr. Michael Williams, of Treviner (son of Mr. Williams, of Scorrier), entered the room, and said that he had galloped out from Truro (from which Scorrier is distant seven miles), having seen a gentleman there who had come by that evening's mail from London, who said that he was in the lobby of the House of Commons on the evening of the 11th, when a man called Bellingham had shot Mr. Perceval; and that, as it might occasion some great Ministerial changes, and might affect Mr. Tucker's political friends, he had come out as fast as he could, to make him acquainted with it, having heard at Truro that he had passed through that place in the afternoon on his way to Scorrier. After the astonishment which this intelligence had created had a little subsided, Mr. Williams described most particularly the appearance and dress of the man that he saw in his dream fire the pistol, as he had done before of Mr. Perceval. About six weeks after, Mr. Williams, having business in town, went, accompanied by a friend, to the House of Commons, where, as has already been observed, he had never before been. Immediately that he came to the steps at the entrance of the

lobby, he said, 'This place is as distinctly within my recollection, in my dream, as any room in my house;' and he made the same observation when he entered the lobby. He then pointed out the exact spot where Bellingham stood when he fired, and which Mr. Perceval had reached when he was struck by the ball, and where and how he fell. The dress both of Mr. Perceval and Bellingham agreed with the descriptions given by Mr. Williams even to the most minute particular." The "Times" states that Mr. Williams was then alive, and the witnesses to whom he made known the particulars of his dream were also living; and that the editor had received the statement from a correspondent of unquestionable veracity.

Mr. Howitt, in "The Country Year-book," states that he is indebted to a friend of his for the following singular dream:—"In the year 1795 the Rev. George Biddulph, at that time chaplain to the Earl of —, and my college associate, was in London. We spent much time together; and as he was a man of an earnest, serious turn of mind, our conversation was very much on religious subjects, he being anxious to dis sever me from the free-thinking principles of the French and German philosophy, to which I was at that time much addicted. One day, being together at Woolwich, we took a stroll on Blackheath, when we accidentally came upon a young man, who, having been overturned in a gig, had slightly injured his arm. The little service we were enabled to render him led to our spending the remainder of the day together; and as it was then hardly past noon, this consisted of several hours, which was sufficient to enable young men socially inclined to become tolerably familiar before parting. Our new acquaintance informed us that he was Lieutenant Macintosh, in the service of the East India Company, and that the following day he was to embark for his destination. He was a young man of remarkably prepossessing appearance and lively manners. In the course of conversation some words dropped from myself with reference to an unfinished argument with my clerical friend, on our often contested religious subjects. This led to the discovery that the young soldier was even more sceptically disposed than myself; and now, with such an ally, the argument was resumed, and continued till we were about to part, when the lieutenant, asserting his positive belief in no other life than the present, declared that if, after death, his soul really existed, and he died before his new clerical acquaintance, he would pay him a visit, and confess his error, adding that he would not fail to enlighten me also. We parted, and we saw the lieutenant no more, at least in this life. One remark I must make in this place, which is of importance, namely, that although the lieutenant had told us his name, he had not mentioned his family, nor his native place, nor had we inquired about them; and after that time, neither of us thought more of him, I believe, than is commonly thought of any passing agreeable acquaintance, who has enabled us to spend an hour or two pleasantly. One night, however, about three years afterwards, I dreamed that I was sitting in my library as usual, when the door opened, and a young man entered, whom I immediately recognised to be Lieutenant Macintosh, though he was then wearing a captain's uniform. He looked much sun-burnt, as one might naturally expect a man to be after about three years' exposure to a tropical sun. His countenance, however, was grave, and

there was a peculiar expression in it, that even in my dream excited an unusual degree of attention. I motioned him to be seated, and, without addressing him, waited for him to speak. He did so immediately, and his words were these: 'I promised, when we were at Woolwich together, to visit you if I died. I am dead, and have now kept my word. You can tell all your friends who are sceptics that the soul does not perish with the body.'

"When these words were ended I awoke; and so distinctly were they, as it seemed, impressed upon my senses, that for the moment I could not believe but that they had been spoken to me by the actual tongue of man. I convinced myself that the chamber was empty, and then, remembering that immediately before going to bed I had been reading the mystical writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, I persuaded myself that this was but the effect of my excited imagination, and again slept. The next morning I regarded it merely as an ordinary dream. I was not a little surprised, therefore, when, early in the day, I received a visit from my friend Biddulph, who instantly accosted me with the inquiry whether I had heard any news of that Lieutenant Macintosh whose acquaintance we had accidentally made three years before. I related my dream. 'Strange, indeed!' he said; 'then of a truth he is dead.' He then related that the preceding night he also had a similar dream, with this difference, that it was twice repeated, and that each time he was desired to write to —, in Inverness-shire, where his mother and sister lived, and to inform them of his death.

"After the first dream, Biddulph, like myself, on awakening had persuaded himself that it was *merely* a dream; and after some time had again slept, when it was repeated precisely as before; and then, on waking, had risen, and written down not only the address, but a letter to the clergyman of the parish, inquiring from him if a family, such as had been intimated to him, lived at the place mentioned, but without giving them the reasons for this inquiry. When day came, however, the whole thing seemed so extraordinary, that he determined to come and consult with me, who had known the young man just as well as himself, before he took any decided step. The whole thing appeared so strange, and so contrary to all human experience, that I could only advise him to send the letter which he had written to the clergyman, and be guided by his answer. We resolved not to mention the subject to any one, but we noted down the date and the hour of these remarkable dreams. A few posts afterwards settled the whole thing. Mrs. Macintosh and her daughter were living, as had been told in the dream, at —; and the clergyman added, 'that he hoped his correspondent had news to communicate respecting Captain Macintosh, about whom they were anxious.' Thus, two points were proved; our lieutenant had become a captain, and his mother and sister were living at the address communicated in this dream; as a natural inference, therefore, the third fact was true also. As the best means of communicating the sad intelligence he had so singularly received, Biddulph made a journey into Inverness-shire for the express purpose. In the course of a few months official tidings came of the death of Captain Macintosh, who had been struck down by a *coup-de-soleil*, while hunting up the country with a party of brother officers; and the time of his death exactly corresponded with that of our dreams."

Varieties.

POTATO DISEASE.—Mr. W. Andrews, chairman of the Natural History department of the Royal Dublin Society, records the following facts, the first showing that the disease originates in atmospheric influences, the second showing that it is best to leave the tubers of diseased plants undug and unpitted. In August, 1845, I spent a day (Sunday) with a botanical friend at Malahide. The day was oppressively close and moist. In the evening frequent and vivid lightning occurred, and on our return late to Dublin we experienced a most damp and chilling state of atmosphere. This weather continued the next day. I should have observed that on the morning of Sunday we had noticed the potato fields to be particularly luxuriant. The following Wednesday whole fields presented a withered and blackened appearance. Could fungi—even *Botrytis infestans*—effect such a sudden change? A communication made to me from the west of Ireland stated that a large field, which had all the appearance of most luxuriant growth and an abundant crop, from the state of the weather became suddenly withered and blackened, the haulms giving out a most disagreeable odour. A great part of the field was dug, and the potatoes pitted with care, but all more or less decomposed and rotted. In the remaining part of the field which was left undug through the winter, the potatoes were found perfectly sound, and the produce was preserved for seed for the next season's planting. That seed, without failures, produced a most abundant and healthy crop.

RAGGED SCHOOLS IN NEW YORK.—There are in New York two distinct sets of schools—the one called "the common schools," the other known as "the corporate schools." The former, supported by rates, are what is called the common school system of America. These schools every child of the city has free admission to. Yet with this free provision there is a very large proportion of the children of New York which the rate-supported education does not reach. The poorest or ragged class cannot be induced to attend these schools, though free, as, among other things, they suffer from the petty persecutions of the children who are better clad than themselves. In consequence of this condition the other set of schools—the corporate schools—sprang into existence some years ago from voluntary religious efforts to supply that portion of the population which was thus left uneducated. These are the "American ragged schools," supported by voluntary subscriptions, and managed by voluntary managers; their funds are supplemented to the extent of about a third from the city funds. In the year 1869 there were 6,900 children in average attendance, and 18,752 on the books of these schools. In 1870 there were above 7,000 in average attendance, and over 19,000 on the books. The schools of these societies are in the poorest districts of the city, in the very localities where the children are to be found. These schools form thus a supplementary system, supplying education to a class which the common schools had failed to reach.

MEDICAL ADVICE GRATIS.—The late Mr. Wardrop was in the habit for many years of giving advice to "poor people" at his house, in Charles Street, St. James's Square, and was induced to discontinue the practice from the following circumstances:—He had been called out one morning early to a patient in the neighbouring square. On returning home he saw alighting from a coroneted carriage a somewhat shabby old man, whom he recognised as one of his gratuitous morning patients. He made a detour, and returning inquired of the footman the name of his master, whom he ascertained to be the Earl of —. When his turn came the pauper patient was ushered into the consulting-room of the great surgeon. Wardrop, in his blunt and decisive style, addressed the impostor by his name. The surprise of the latter may be conceived. Wardrop, who kept notes of all his cases, ascertained that he had been defrauded of somewhat about twenty guineas. This sum he demanded under a threat of exposure of the culprit, and was successful in obtaining it. We have heard Wardrop relate this anecdote, and describe in his graphic manner the miserable appearance that the old rogue presented. The circumstances detailed took so strong an effect upon Wardrop that he determined to discontinue a vicious system. Frauds of this description are so frequent since the establishment of proprietary special hospitals and dispensaries that surgeons in general practice, particularly in the metropolis, are robbed of a large portion of their income. It is high time that this system of robbery should be put a stop to, and we trust that the efforts of the Charity Organisation Society will be, to some extent at least, effectual in suppressing it.—*Medical Times and Gazette.*

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